

The safety of Canadians is Transport Canada's top priority. The department remains committed to working with our stakeholders to examine all means of improving rail safety and the safe transportation of dangerous goods. The Minister has met with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities to discuss the transportation of dangerous goods. Municipalities can ask rail companies for information regarding the types of dangerous goods materials that are being transported.

Transport Canada supports first responders and municipalities in the following ways:

- Transport Canada operates the Canadian Transport Emergency Centre (CANUTEC) to assist emergency response personnel in handling dangerous goods emergencies. First responders can contact CANUTEC 24 hours a day to receive specific guidance on incidents involving dangerous goods.
- Transport Canada safety program is focused on prevention while making sure an appropriate emergency response capability exists should an incident occur. For example, when a shipper wishes to transport a substance that is considered highly dangerous under the Transportation of Dangerous Goods Act, 1992, the shipper must submit an Emergency Response Assistance Plan (ERAP) to Transport Canada. The intent of the ERAP is to ensure that there is an immediate and suitable response to emergency situations involving the dangerous goods for which the plan was created. Assistance from the plan holder may be in the form of telephone advice based on the information given by the first responders at the scene of an emergency or travel to the scene with specialized personnel and equipment to respond.
- By distributing, free of charge, an Emergency Response Guidebook to first responders, 911 centres and other dangerous goods professionals. The department provides a Guidebook to each first responder vehicle (police, fire and ambulance) in Canada. This comprehensive guide, developed by Transport Canada in partnership with the United States and Mexico, enables first responders to quickly identify the specific or generic hazards of the material(s) involved in an incident. It provides recommended evacuation distances, describes potential hazards of a dangerous good, and supplies safety information on first aid, recommended protective clothing, respiratory equipment and evacuation distances. Transport Canada's Emergency Response Guidebook is available at: <http://www.tc.gc.ca/eng/canutec/guide-menu-227.htm>.

Railway companies are responsible for the safety of their rail line infrastructure, railway equipment and operations. This includes ongoing inspection, testing and maintenance programs in accordance with regulatory requirements, as well as any particular operating and environmental conditions.

Transport Canada's oversight role includes monitoring railway companies for compliance with rules, regulations and standards, as well as the overall safety of railway operations through audits, inspections, and investigations, and takes appropriate action as required.